/718 cont./

857 dangling on their backs; and only supported by holding them by their wrists in front of them" /cited in English/.

leather, the sides of which are about 40 centimeters long, with short straps knotted to the four corners. After she has lifted the child onto her back, she places this piece over it and ties the straps in front of her chest. When she straightens up, the child sits securely and lets his legs dangle down on either side of her, encircling her neck with his little arms.

The child must, of course, submit to all the effects of the weather (147), although in heavy rain and strong wind the mother

147. Hyades (f):572 expresses his astonishment thus: "The Fuegian babies are never clothed. Thus they brave the inclemencies of the weather, uniquely protected by contact with the mother's warmth" /translated from French/.

remains in the hut as much as possible. Thus, the children, from the first days of their lives, become accustomed to the rigors and severities of their homeland. Nevertheless, it is striking that chil- [165] dren under a year old rarely die (148). Perhaps the babies' freedom

148. Bridges (a):181 confirms: "It is a general custom with these people to bear their children out of doors, be the weather fine or inclement, even though it is snowing or raining, in winter and summer" /cited in English/. Compare Lovisato (b):146.

of movement is advantageous. As we have said, they are permitted to crawl about on the ground for many hours, completely naked and quite unimpeded, or they may lie on their backs kicking merrily as long as they like. On the canoe trip, however, they must forgo this. Any kind of baby carriage is unknown to the Yamana; it would be useless, since during the day the children spend a great deal of time in the fragile vessel.

857 145 Just as on Isla Grande (Vol. I, 378), the babies of the entire

/727 cont./

163 average, but one not infrequently finds young women who already have ten or twelve."

brood of children is always a recommendation for the parents; no one would venture to make sarcastic remarks about supposed incontinence in sexual life. In general the children of a couple follow one another at brief intervals (165).

165. Obviously Martial:198 exaggerates with his remark that "children are often born after long intervals" /translated from French/. He was probably influenced by Bridges (e):202 whose assertion, "few women have more than six children, owing to the great length of time between the several births" /cited in English/, is wrong on both counts.

•165 Although the fertility of Foegian marriages is amazing, it is counteracted by a frighteningly high infant mortality. The reasons are not as easy to determine as the facts themselves. Why, in view of the high birth rate, the population has remained the same as in former centuries raises the question as to the specific nature of the agreement in numbers. It is brought about by the mortality of many young /728/ people. During their first year of life children seldom die, but all the more soon after, and it is only at the age of puberty that the mortality rate again sharply decreases. Bove (e):158 is right when he says: "Mortality between the ages of two and ten is enormous." The following figures will confirm in general what I have said. Each of the two groups of eight women from around Orange Bay just referred to (p. 531) had a total of only 18 living children. This, reduced to an average per family, is too little to keep the race alive. Hence there is no doubt that, in view of the well-known fertility of Indian women, a rather large number of children from these families must have died. To document this we give a few data which Hyades (q):189 likewise gives: "A Foegian woman 60 years old had had 14 children, only three of whom had not died prematurely. Another woman 45 years old had had nine children, eight dead at an early age" /translated from French/. By way of contrast, however, he also mentions the

/728 cont./

165 fact that "one woman 28 years old had had seven children, of whom only one had died prematurely" /translated from French/. The most striking case that I can report from recent times is the fate of Walter's children: out of a total of eleven, only two are living.

As we have said, however, it is difficult to understand the reasons for the abnormal infant mortality (166). In any case the

[144 177]

166. The explanations offered by Bridges (a):202 are not very useful. He merely establishes that "few women save all their children; most die in early infancy; a disease in the throat carries many off" /cited in English/. This vague reference to a throat ailment makes us think of diphtheria which was imported by Europeans.

assumption is justified that natural feeding at the mother's breast in the first year of life is a more guarantee of keeping the child alive than the food children eat from the second to the tenth year. During these years food seems to me far more important for the child than external protection, care, and clothing. A child that has reached the eleventh year has acquired enough physical resistance to go on living; weaklings have been eliminated by that time.

842 A reference to the barrenness of Fuegian women is in order here. Formerly it was certainly an extremely rare occurrence (167).

167. Hyades (q):188 also represents the view that "sterility is doubtless rare among the Fuegians; we have seen no case of a woman under 35 years old who was sterile" /translated from French/.

and various informants, among them the aged Reverend John Lawrence, could not tell me of any women, except Flora and Gertie, who were childless. If there are no children in a marriage, the woman is regarded as defective. The childless husband, meeting [illegible], takes another woman who without doubt will give him

/1181 cont./

1. Death

[4] The Fuegian faces all uncertainty with astonishing equanimity and quiet self-control. He is able /1182/ to await death with open eyes, without fear and alarm. Hyades (p) 328 expresses himself conservatively and merely says: "They have little fear of death" /translated from French/, but this is admiring too much. Bridges (1) 14 expresses himself more accurately: "They feared death because of the suffering and misery attending it and because it was the end of life" /cited in English/. Certainly, everyone clings to life and loves it very much, for that reason also the threats of Watauinéwa of an untimely death have a vast effect on the individual's conduct. As soon as he sees there is no escape, however, he submits at once without complaint. One never hears a person regretting that he must depart from this life, although he knows nothing about the new form of existence which he is entering.

• 165 [4] [3] In earlier centuries, as in most recent times, almost all Yamana died a natural death. Fatal accidents were exceptions and murder even more so. It has been shown that epidemics have wrought havoc in the Indian population only since their close association with Europeans. Except for children's deaths, the greater majority of Yamana succumb to old age. "Old people die because they are old!" Although in this case the Indians place more emphasis on the natural process as something they take for granted, nevertheless they do not completely forget that Watauinéwa causes death.

[3] The indications of approaching death usually appear suddenly. If a person feels his strength leaving him, he stretches out on his miserable pallet and informs those present of his condition. They immediately take it into account, and from then on the nearest relatives stay close to him in order to observe the course of events. In such a situation death usually follows within a few hours. Strangely enough they make no effort to relieve the dying person by attending him, but squat around the fire, apparently quite indifferent. The person himself does not want or demand anything, for he rapidly becomes weaker. Actually the people present are waiting for a quick end and do not watch the dying one closely because they know they cannot help him. When the